This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

receiving, by a computing device, first business logic expressed in one or more declarative languages, the first business logic including a first process description, the first process description describing a first process of a business process instance in terms of one or more flows;

receiving, by the computing device, second business logic expressed in the one or more declarative languages, the second business logic including a second process description, the second process description describing a second process of the business process instance in terms of one or more rules, the second process being different from the first process; and

executing, by ~~a~~ the computing device, the first business logic and the second business logic~~expressed in one or more declarative languages, the business logic including a process description, the process description defining one or more flows, one or more rules, and one or more states~~,

wherein the business process instance is associated with one or more states,

wherein each of the one or more flows represents a control flow between business functions,

wherein each of the one or more states represents a legal state transition for at least one business entity, and

wherein each of the one or more rules represents a business rule or policy enforced on the at least one business entity in an externalized form.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26,

wherein ~~a business~~ the first or second process ~~described by the process description~~ includes one or more tasks,

wherein at least one of the one or more tasks is selected from a library of tasks in which each task has a precondition and a postcondition, and

wherein the desired precondition and postcondition are automatically determined prior to execution.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the one or more flows, the one or more states, and the one or more rules are coordinated by a controller software module.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26,

wherein the first and second business logic ~~is~~ are executed by a plurality of parties,

wherein at least one party of the plurality of parties acts as a trusted party for at least one other party in the plurality of parties, and

wherein the trusted party guarantees correctness of a protocol at design time and at run time, maintains records of all interactions, and performs some activities for the at least one other party during the execution of the first and second business logic.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein at least one of the one or more declarative languages is XML.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein at least one of the one or more declarative languages is WSDL.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26,

wherein one or more assertions are associated with ~~a business~~ the first or second process ~~described by the process description~~, and

wherein the one or more assertions describe one or more preconditions or one or more postconditions at one or more points in the ~~business~~ first or second process.

33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the one or more assertions are checked at runtime to ensure that the executing of the first or second business logic is correct.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the one or more assertions which describe the one or more preconditions are used to check the correctness of the first or second business logic prior to the executing of the first or second business logic.

35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the one or more assertions which describe the one or more postconditions are used to check the correctness of the first or second business logic subsequent to the executing of the first or second business logic.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein each of the one or more rules influences the control flow and cause one or more state transitions.

37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein the first and second business logic is executed via a web-based transport protocol.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the web-based transport protocol is HTTP.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the web-based transport protocol is HTTPS.

40. (Currently Amended) One or more non-transitory computer-readable media having computer-executable instructions stored thereon that, when executed by at least one processor, cause the at least one processor to:

receive first business logic expressed in one or more declarative languages, the first business logic including a first process description, the first process description describing a first process of a business process instance in terms of one or more flows;

receive second business logic expressed in the one or more declarative languages, the second business logic including a second process description, the second process description describing a second process of the business process instance in terms of one or more rules, the second process being different from the first process; and

execute the first business logic and the second business logic~~expressed in one or more declarative languages, the business logic including a process description, the process description defining one or more flows, one or more rules, and one or more states~~,

wherein the business process instance is associated with one or more states;

wherein each of the one or more flows represents a control flow between business functions,

wherein each of the one or more states represents a legal state transition for at least one business entity, and

wherein each of the one or more rules represents a business rule or policy enforced on the at least one business entity in an externalized form.

41. (Currently Amended) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 40,

wherein ~~a business~~the first or second process ~~described by the process description~~ includes one or more tasks,

wherein at least one of the one or more tasks is selected from a library of tasks in which each task has a precondition and a postcondition, and

wherein the desired precondition and postcondition are automatically determined prior to execution.

42. (Previously Presented) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 40, wherein the one or more flows, the one or more states, and the one or more rules are coordinated by a controller software module.

43. (Currently Amended) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 40,

wherein the first and second business logic ~~is~~ are executed by a plurality of parties,

wherein at least one party of the plurality of parties acts as a trusted party for at least one other party in the plurality of parties, and

wherein the trusted party guarantees correctness of a protocol at design time and at run time, maintains records of all interactions, and performs some activities for the at least one other party during the execution of the first and second business logic.

44. (Previously Presented) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 40, wherein at least one of the one or more declarative languages is XML.

45. (Previously Presented) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 40, wherein at least one of the one or more declarative languages is WSDL.

46. (Currently Amended) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 40,

wherein one or more assertions are associated with ~~a business~~ the first or second process ~~described by the process description~~, and

wherein the one or more assertions describe one or more preconditions or one or more postconditions at one or more points in the ~~business~~ first or second process.

47. (Currently Amended) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 46, wherein the one or more assertions are checked at runtime to ensure that the executing of the first or second business logic is correct.

48. (Currently Amended) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 46, wherein the one or more assertions which describe the one or more preconditions are used to check the correctness of the first or second business logic prior to the executing of the first or second business logic.

49. (Currently Amended) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 46, wherein the one or more assertions which describe the one or more postconditions are used to check the correctness of the first or second business logic subsequent to the executing of the first or second business logic.

50. (Previously Presented) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 40, wherein each of the one or more rules influences the control flow and cause one or more state transitions.

51. (Currently Amended) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 40, wherein the first and second business logic is executed via a web-based transport protocol.

52. (Previously Presented) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 51, wherein the web-based transport protocol is HTTP.

53. (Previously Presented) The one or more non-transitory computer-readable media of claim 51, wherein the web-based transport protocol is HTTPS.

54. (Currently Amended) A system, comprising:

means for receiving first business logic expressed in one or more declarative languages, the first business logic including a first process description, the first process description describing a first process of a business process instance in terms of one or more flows;

means for receiving second business logic expressed in the one or more declarative languages, the second business logic including a second process description, the second process description describing a second process of the business process instance in terms of one or more rules, the second process being different from the first process; and

~~means for storing business logic expressed in one or more declarative languages, the business logic including a process description, the process description defining one or more flows, one or more rules, and one or more states; and~~

means for executing the first business logic and the second business logic,

wherein the business process instance is associated with one or more states,

wherein each of the one or more flows represents a control flow between business functions,

wherein each of the one or more states represents a legal state transition for at least one business entity, and

wherein each of the one or more rules represents a business rule or policy enforced on the at least one business entity in an externalized form.